5/16/70

Dear Dick (cc. Harold),

I just got your 5/12 to Harold and your 5/13 to me.

I would like to have a copy of Sprague's article in Computors and Automation. Instead of going to all the hassel of sending copies to Harold through me, why don't you give me the address so I can write for my own.

Skolnick: If you can, please send me Penn Jones' editorial on Sk. I was sick when I read Time's account.

399 "ridge": It is good to keep in mind your caution on the nature of the ridge, how delicate it is (or was). By the same token, I have not been able to reproduce the damage I see on 399 base. I have several bullets in which I have made "craters" as you did before to simulate Frazier's. However, when I rub a finger or fingernail over the resulting ridges, two things happen. When just the smooth finger is rubbed across the ridge, nothing happens. And this is on a flat base. I think with the nature of 399's base, you couldn't get the finger itself close enough to actually "rub" the ridge. When I run my fingernail across such ridges, it completely removes them, resulting in long striae from the edge of the crater along the flat portion of the base. I know that Marion Johnson has run his fingernail over 399's base for he did it once in front of me and I belive he did it for Harold--or Harold may have done it himself. At any rate, I await Nichols' base photo which may resolve the issue.

LBJ: When you refer to LBJ's rewriting of history, I assume you refer to the most recent CBS broadcast. I don't recall anything about an "international conspiracy" on this so perhaps you could clarify this for me.

What you say about a "communist conspiracy" is so true. It has become the "liberal" conservative's assassination rhetoric. Anytime I mention assassination before them, they say, "Well, suppose it really was a communist conspiracy? It's only going to worsen things if it gets out." As if to say, "We know those rotten Commies killed JFK but we'll be liberal and won't hold it against them." Ahhhh!

Wecht Letter: I put more in Wecht's response to my letter than you do. I presented this idea to him and he apparently agreed. You are right that a better response was warranted, though.XXXXXXXXX

You dismiss the south knoll too easily, and, I think, with invalid basis. I felt the same way when Harold first presented this to me, but have rejected most of my original arguements against this. I would not put much in the fact that no one reported hearing a shot from there. I am still very wary of the earmitnesses accounts. As for Tague, he cannot be believed. He was excited and confused, and has contradicted himself in many instances.

The JFK head movement is deceiving. At first, it is directly backward. After about 5 frames, as Harold pointed out, it becomes leftward also. Look at it this way. Between 312 and 313, a shot from the right rear has driven JFK head forward and to the left, so that, had there been nothing to obscure it in 313, the head would be turned more to the left in 313 than in 312. Indeed, it is turned

more to the left in 314 than in 312. Think of this not as the result of a front shot, but of a rear shot which struck between 313 and 312. This would have put the head in the turned position we see in 314. Further, assume a shot from directly in front of JFK head hitting in 313. When I specify directly in front, I do not mean had he been facing forward; I mean in his turned position. Such a shot would be expected to push the head directly backwards, as far as it could go, then to be pulled in one direction or another. The Zapruder film indicates that from 314 to 317, the head was in fact thrown directly backwards. Here's why.

Notice the defect in the head in those frames. It is like a triangle with the vertex pointing toward the back of the head. If you superimpose the frames, you will find that from 314 to 317, the vertex is the same distance from the back of the head. If the head had been turning to the left, more of the back of the head would have been exposed, less of the "triangle", thus increasing the distance between the two. But this does not hapen. Not until about 319. Look what occurs in 319. You can barely see the "triangle"anymore, just a very small portion of it. This definatelt means that the head has turned to the left.

What creates the intial illision of "pivot" to the left is the contrast in position between XXXX 312 and 314. As I said, you must view that in terms of movement produced by a rear shot. In reality, the head first moves directly backwards. The consecutive Nix XXXXX frames printed in Six Secs also confirm this(p. 88). From C 4 to C 7 (what would be Z314 to 317), the head progressively moves backwards and lifts up. However, in C 8, it seems to move down. It must be tilting to one side.

The question which arises is what was directly in front of JFK's head at 313. If you recall, I was did a memo similar to this in which I determined the axis of the head in relation to the Plaza. If you transfer the axis I determined onto a view of DP which includes south knoll (such as that published in WW II), you will see that it leads directly into the south knoll, particularly the area near the westernmost pergola there. I have even suggested to Harold the possibility of someone firing from within the pergola.

Think of the advantages. There was no one around there. Escially hidden in a pergola, this place offered the least chance of detection. It is not far from where JFK was, not over 100 yds. In films I've seen taken from around that location, the distance seems even less. There was a parking lot right in back of it, which offered easy escape. And after the shots, all attention was diverted away from this area, though I'm not impkying that this was deliberate.

Cast bullets: It is not so much that I'm thinking in terms of just these bullets, just in terms of anything which could have produced JFK head wounds from the rear. No matter what the likelyhood is, there is the evidence of the wounds themselves, and the characteristics of the rear wounds does limit what we can suppose caused them.

Kent state and other: Soon as I saw the article on that, I knew it was pure crap--didn't pay it any mind. There is, however, somethin now which I am following closely for it parallels an aspect of the assassination so closely that it could be perfect for my book. This involves the 6 blacks killed in the Georgia riots. They were rushed to hosptials at which the doctors felt that 3 were shot in the front, from the front. They even issued reports describing the front wounds as"penetrating". The bodies were examined by the

coroner who originally said he did an autopsy on them. He concluded that all were shot from the rear. A whole thing came up about how it's difficult to tell the difference, how the hosptial docs only made a cursory exam, etc. The coroner admitted that he did not do actual autopsies, just gross examinations. Autopsies were ordered and they confirmed that the men were really shot from behind. You should be able to see the comparison XXXto the assass. Of course there we never did get a real autopsy performed.

I have local articles covering this, and have written the Justice Dept. for anything they have on it--reports, etc. I have some questions to put to you on this, though, which involveX the type of ammo supposedly used.

According to press reports, the "bullets" recovered were "double-ought buckshot." The ammo is supposed to be about .32 caliber from 12 gauge shotguns. 3 of the men had wounds on their chests also, which now are supposed to be exit wounds. How does this ammo behave? And can it exit from someone? I hope I can get more details.

Must go.

Still,